

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1310

USDOC WASHDC

INFO AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMCONSUL NAPLES

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

UNCLAS COPENHAGEN 2212

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, IT

SUBJECT: RFA AFRICA TRAVEL TO ITALY

REF: A. NAIROBI 6092 B. STATE 166298 AND C. COPENHAGEN'S A-48.

BEGIN SUMMARY: RFA COPENHAGEN SEES LITTLE HOPE IN EXPORTING FISH SPECIES IN REF A FROM THE UNITED STATES TO ITALY. ITALIAN MARKET FOR AMERICAN FISH REVIEWED IN GREAT DETAIL IN REF C. RFA COPENHAGEN IS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE OF ITALIAN FISHING IN WATERS OFF OTHER COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

1. DESPITE ITALIAN DEMAND FOR RED MULLET (TRIGLIA), MULLET (CEFALO), SOLE (SOGLIOA) AND SWORDFISH, NOTED IN REF A, REGIONAL FISHERIES ATTACHE COPENHAGEN DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE PRODUCTS LISTED OFFER MUCH OPPORTUNITY FOR U.S. EXPORTS. REF C REVIEWED EXPORTING AMERICAN FISH AND SHELLFISH TO THE ITALIAN MARKET IN GREAT DETAIL INCLUDING ANALYSIS OF SEVERAL SURVEYS AND MARKET PROMOTION

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EFFORTS DURING THE PAST FOUR YEARS; COPIES OF REF C WERE

SENT TO ROME, MILAN AND NAPLES.

2. SINCE ITALIAN REGULATIONS REQUIRE SWORDFISH TO HAVE LESS THEN 0.7 PPM MERCURY CONTENT, IT WOULD NOT BE LIKELY FOR A U.S. EXPORTER TO GET U.S. GOVERNMENT CERTIFICATION TO THIS EFFECT SINCE THE MERCURY CONTENT OF SWORDFISH NEARLY ALWAYS EXCEEDS 0.7 PPM. IN ADDITION TO REPORTS SENT TO THE UNITED STATES, RFA COPENHAGEN DISCUSSED MULLET EXPORT POSSIBILITY TO ITALY WITH AMERICAN PRODUCERS IN THE GULF AREA WITH LITTLE RESPONSE. SOLE EXPORTS WOULD BE DIFFICULT BECAUSE THE ITALIANS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN NORTH SEA SOLE (SOLEA SOLEA) AND WOULD NOT PAY HIGH PRICES FOR UNFAMILIAR TYPES OF COMPETING AMERICAN FLATFISHES. THE ITALIAN MARKET FOR RED MULLET (TRIGLIA) IS NOT LARGE ENOUGH FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF ITALIAN IMPORTS OF SIMILAR TYPE MULLET FROM THE UNITED STATES IN A VOLUME NECESSARY TO MAKE SUCH TRADE PROFITABLE. NEVERTHELESS, SPOT SALES OF ALL TYPES OF FISH ARE POSSIBLE AND ANY EFFORT TO INCREASE EXPORTS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED.

3. ITALIAN FISHERIES IN AFRICA HAVE BEEN DECREASING FOR THE PAST DECADE, PARTLY BECAUSE OF LABOR PROBLEMS ON ITALIAN VESSELS BUT PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE EXTENSION OF FISHING LIMITS BY AFRICAN STATES. TALK ABOUT DOING SOMETHING TO OFFSET THE DECLINE HAS BEEN HEARD (AND REPORTED) FOR YEARS WITHOUT RESULTS. THE MODEST ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN FISHING OUT OF SOMALIA WAS GREATLY SET BACK BY THE CLOSURE OF THE SUEZ CANAL. ITALIAN HOPES TO RENEW AND EXPAND FISHING OPERATION IN WATERS OFF THE EAST COAST OF AFRICA DEPEND UPON, AMONG OTHER THINGS, GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES, A BETTER DEAL FROM COASTAL AFRICAN STATES THAN CAN BE EXPECTED, AND MORE FISHERY RESOURCES THAN BELIEVED TO BE IN THE AREA.

4. THE EXISTING WIDE FISHERY ZONES AND THE PENDING 200 MILE ZONES, AS WELL AS EXPANSION OF THE FLEETS OF COASTAL COUNTRIES WITH IMPORTANT COASTAL FISH STOCKS, POINT TO A FURTHER CONTRACTION OF ITALIAN FISHING IN WATERS OFF OTHER COUNTRIES. THIS TYPE OF CONTRACTION
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WILL BE EXPERIENCED BY THE FISHING EFFORT OF OTHER COUNTRIES IN A POSITION SIMILAR TO THAT OF ITALY.
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